

CIA/OGCR /PN 61.2684/75 ITEM 007 UNCLASSIFIED--PRC CITY BRIEF

T' IEN-CHIN

CIA JUL75

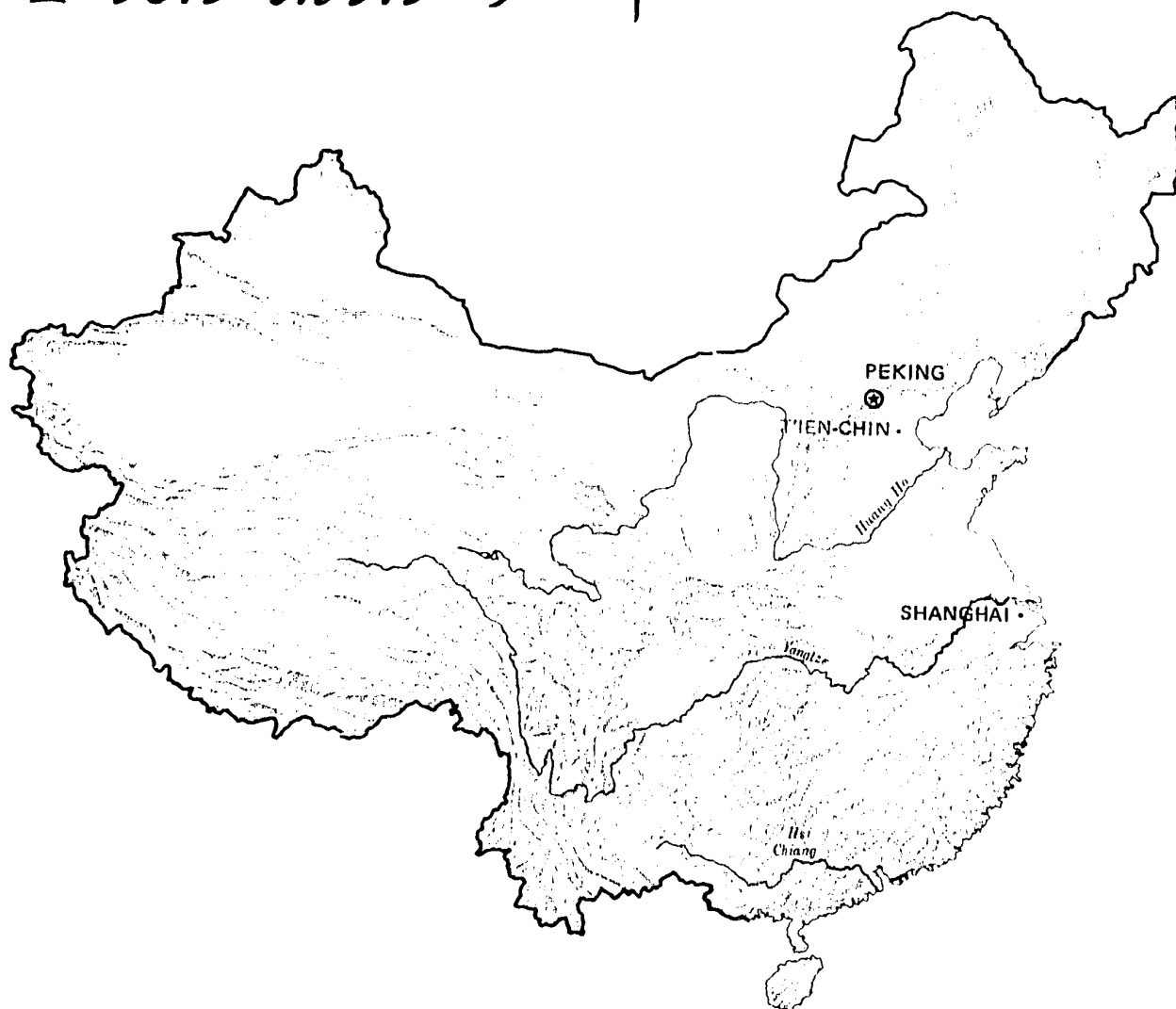
01 OF 01

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ITEM 007

PRC CITY BRIEF

T'ien-chin 天津



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T' IEN-CHIN (Tientsin, T'ien-ching)

(pronounced tien-gin)

Chinese romanized system
of spelling:

Tianjin

Meaning in Chinese:

entrance to the heavenly
capital (Peking)

Location:

39°08'N 117°12'E
(approx. latitude of
Cincinnati, Ohio)

Elevation:

16 feet above sea level

Population:

4,200,000

Climate:

	<u>Jan</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>Oct</u>
Mean daily maximum temperature (°F)	34	68	90	68
Mean daily minimum temperature (°F)	16	45	72	48
Mean number of days with precipitation	2	4	13	4
Mean monthly precipitation (inches)	0.2	0.6	7.1	0.6

T'IENTHIN

General

T'ien-chin, located on the North China Plain some 75 miles southeast of Peking and 30 miles inland from Po Hai (Gulf of Chi-li), is China's third largest city in population, a key transportation hub, and a leading industrial center. The importance of the city derives from its natural physical advantages of location and accessibility via land and water routes to a densely populated and politically important hinterland. The modern development of T'ien-chin was spurred by western capital after 1860, expansion and modernization of trade and transport, and nearby sources of raw materials.

T'ien-chin sprawls for almost 10 miles along the banks of the Hai Ho, a short and troublesome river that serves as the outlet for several streams that drain the northern section of the North China Plain. Because the elevation of T'ien-chin is only a few feet above sea level, the city and its environs have been subject to periodic and occasionally heavy flooding in years past. The old city, most commercial establishments, and half of the former concession areas of the Western powers are located on the right (south or west) bank; the major industrial zone, several military installations, and other former concessions are located on the left bank. Industrial expansion has taken place west and north of the city along the rail lines. Beyond the built-up area is a monotonously flat agricultural landscape of fields, villages, and canals. Important mineral resources situated nearby include coal from the Kai-luan (Kai-lan) mines to the northeast near T'ang-shan, salt along the shores of Po Hai, and recently discovered petroleum fields located to the south at Sheng-li and Ta-ku.

Since 1949 T'ien-chin has greatly enlarged its municipal area through absorption of adjoining satellite towns and rural agricultural areas. In 1949 the municipal area was only 21 square miles; by the early 1950s, the municipality had expanded to more than 1,200 square miles gained through annexation of the T'ang-ku--Ta-ku port area and the Han-ku chemical center. T'ien-chin was a city of independent administrative status until 1958, at which time it was demoted and placed under provincial jurisdiction but simultaneously designated the capital of Hopeh Province. First-order or province-level status was restored in 1967 and the provincial capital was removed to Shih-chia-chuang. In late

1973 the municipality was enlarged again by some 2,600 square miles with the addition of five hsien (counties), principally consisting of the rich agricultural region to the north and west.

T'ien-chin is at the same latitude as Washington, D.C., and temperatures, especially in summer, are comparable. Yearly precipitation amounts, however, are only about half of that received in Washington and the spring and fall transitional periods are shorter. Winter in T'ien-chin is cold and dry; January temperatures average near freezing and occasionally subzero readings are recorded. A little snow usually falls from November through March and the Hai Ho and Po Hai may freeze; ice breaking operations are constantly required to keep the port facilities open. Summers are hot and humid. Temperatures reach 90°F or above about 50 percent of time and, occasionally, exceed 100°F. Almost two-thirds of the yearly precipitation -- mostly from thunderstorms -- is received during July and August. September and October are the best months to visit T'ien-chin; by then, the heat of summer has eased and rainfall has decreased sharply. Temperatures during autumn average in the 70's at midday and drop into the 50's at night.

History

Although recent archaeological discoveries indicate that a settlement at the present site of T'ien-chin dates back to the Warring States Period (403-221 B.C.), continuous occupation of the site apparently began about 800 years ago. This early settlement was named Chih-ku -- an apt designation meaning "buying and selling." By the early 15th century, the town had assumed its modern role as a collection and transshipment point for goods from the south, shipped either by inland waterways or sea, thence transported to the capital at Peking and elsewhere within the Chinese Empire. A military garrison was posted, city walls built, storage facilities expanded, and merchants prospered.

The modern development of T'ien-chin began in the mid-19th century following its designation as a treaty port (1858) and the granting of concessions to Great Britain, France, and several other western nations soon after. Western-style buildings were constructed in each concession and part of T'ien-chin began to resemble a European city. Trade greatly expanded and industrial development grew and diversified. Port facilities were improved and enlarged and ocean shipping increased; somewhat later railroads largely supplanted the movement of goods inland via canals. Industry, particularly light industry such as textiles and other consumer goods, became established and the population of the city increased from an estimated 300,000 at midcentury to about 600,000 by 1900.

T'ien-chin continued to develop rapidly after 1900. It soon became China's second leading port (and the most important in North China), surpassed only by Shanghai as a center for manufacturing. In many respects the two cities were markedly similar: locations near but not on the sea; a history of rapid industrialization and population growth spurred by the development of the treaty port system and the influx of western capital and entrepreneurship; and a concentration on light industry and consumer goods, particularly textiles. T'ien-chin, however, was troubled by the increasing siltation of the Hai Ho and the consequent problems of dredging to keep open a shipping channel. Eventually, port facilities were constructed downstream at the mouth of the Hai Ho at Ta-ku. During the Japanese occupation of the city (1937-45), a major construction program was begun to construct an artificial harbor and deepwater berthing facilities -- an undertaking finally completed in 1952 after the Chinese Communists had assumed power.

Post-1949 Developments

The growth of T'ien-chin since 1949 has continued to be abetted by its natural advantages of location and accessibility to land and water transport. The national railnet connects T'ien-chin with Peking and the Northwest, Shen-yang and the Northeast, and the lower Yangtze Valley and South China. Ships up to 10,000 tons can berth at T'ang-ku Hsin-kang (New Port), with smaller ships up to 3,000 tons servicing T'ien-chin; canals and rivers permit a limited amount of cargo to be moved in and near the city by shallow-draft boats and barges. Industry, though still oriented towards consumer goods, has diversified and there is a significant production of iron and steel, motor vehicles and component parts, heavy machinery, chemicals, and a variety of other goods.

T'ien-chin has few attractions, no spectacular views, and little of historical or cultural interest. The core of the city retains a faded facade of European-style buildings and wide, tree-lined streets; the outlying sections, however, present a more characteristic post-1949 Chinese urban panorama of recently built industrial plants, workers housing, drab government buildings, and occasional parks. The former Japanese, British, and French Concessions located on the right bank of the river still comprise the focal point of the city, a district now called Ho-p'ing, where the main shopping districts, major government buildings, principal hotels, and several parks are located. To the north is the small, rectangular old city, or "Chinese town,"

bisected by two main streets that in turn divide it into four sections each criss-crossed by a maze of narrow lanes and crowded buildings. Streets constructed on the foundations of ancient city walls form the perimeter of the old city. The southwestern suburbs contain parks and universities (T'ien-chin, Ho-pei, and Nan-k'ai). The largest park in the city, Shui-shang Kung-yuan (Water Park), also is located here; it includes an exhibition hall, museum, and lake.

Perhaps the most striking construction project -- and undoubtedly the largest -- in the vicinity of T'ien-chin is the work on the Hai Ho and its feeder streams. The principal problem is that the several streams converging on T'ien-chin have a combined capacity far greater than the carrying capacity of the Hai Ho, their outlet to the sea. Since 1963 when extensive flooding occurred, several major water conservancy projects have been under way in response to Chairman Mao's order that the Hai Ho "must be brought under permanent control." Work near T'ien-chin has included construction of streambeds to form new outlets to the sea, thus bypassing the Hai Ho, and various other water control facilities, including locks, pumping stations, and the like.



T'IENTHIN

